

Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A catheter, comprising:

a proximal shaft defining a guidewire lumen and an inflation lumen there through, the proximal shaft having a longitudinal cut extending radially from an outer surface of the proximal shaft to the guidewire lumen, wherein the inflation lumen is arcuate shaped; at least one plank-like support strip entirely embedded within a wall of the proximal shaft and radially disposed between the guidewire lumen and an outer surface of the proximal shaft, wherein the support strip extends proximate the longitudinal cut; and

a guide member slidably encircling ~~coupled to~~ the proximal shaft for providing transverse access to the guidewire lumen via the longitudinal cut.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The catheter of claim 1, further comprising:

a curved reinforcement member disposed adjacent to the inflation lumen such that the reinforcement member is entirely embedded within the wall of the proximal shaft and radially disposed between the inflation lumen and the outer surface of proximal shaft.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The catheter of claim 2, further comprising:

a joint member disposed in the proximal shaft at a circumferential location that is situated between an end of the support strip and an end of the curved reinforcement member wherein the joint member permits bending of the proximal shaft and opening of the longitudinal cut.

Claim 4 (original): The catheter of claim 3, wherein the joint member is constructed of one of a polyolefin.

Claim 5 (original): The catheter of claim 3, wherein the joint member is partially embedded within the wall of the shaft.